This is a packed issue of MITESOL Messages, so I am going to keep this president’s message brief.

Most importantly, I want to encourage everyone to take a moment to think of something that you do or know that you would like to share with other ESL professionals. When you think of something, take a moment to submit a proposal to present at the conference in Grand Rapids in November. Consistently, the favorite sessions at our conference each year are those that share practical tips for the classroom or program, whether for teachers or administrators. I was intimidated by the idea of submitting a proposal to a state conference for some time. Now, however, I have been through the conference process from the inside, and I know how much a conference’s success comes from the members.

(Continued on p. 3)

“Always model what you want your students to do by doing it yourself.” Countless times I’ve had this thought run through my head as I prepared lessons or talked to colleagues about their teaching. Undoubtedly, I first heard this admonition during my years as a graduate student. And, yet, I don’t recall anyone ever telling me what I think is the most important application of the phrase. I truly believe that to improve our practice as ESL teachers, we must be language learners ourselves.

Many ESL teachers become English teachers after a brief—or extended—flirtation with a second (let’s use second with the understanding that it could be third, fourth, etc.) language of their own. My resume, for example, includes an advanced degree in Spanish and coursework in French and Catalan. Others come to the classroom having themselves learned English as a second language. While these experiences can be quite helpful in recognizing the problems language learning holds, for the majority of us our language learning experience (Continued on p. 6)

What I Learned over my Summer Vacation
Personal and Professional Imperatives
By Alan Headbloom, English Training Consultants

“So, how was Brazil?” is the first question from almost everyone’s lips.

After escaping the harshness (Continued on p. 9)
From the Co-Editors
By Fabiana Sacchi and Silvia Pessoa

We hope you are all enjoying your summer and are getting plenty of rest before the next academic year starts! This newsletter is full of wonderful insights from MITESOLers who took the time to share their experiences in the classroom and abroad. Thank you all for your submissions!

Things are in full swing for the annual fall conference. This year’s theme is Writing the Academic Waves, so we encourage all of you to attend the conference to learn more about second language writing from this year’s plenary speaker, Tony Silva, and from all the other MITESOLers who will be presenting. At the conference, you’ll also have the opportunity to vote for the new MITESOL Board members. The candidates’ bios are listed on pages 12 and 13. Have fun in Grand Rapids!

Two articles in this newsletter emphasize the importance of learning a foreign language and living in another country. Marian Gonsior’s “Language Teacher/Language Learner” encourages teachers to share their experiences learning a foreign language with their students as a way to relate to students’ struggles with English. Similarly, in “What I Learned over my Summer Vacation” Alan Headbloom describes and reflects on his experience studying Portuguese in Brazil, encouraging teachers to put themselves in their students’ shoes by starting to learn a foreign language.

Carol Wilson-Duffy and Judy Youngquist tell us about LE CALL and grammar workshops that have taken place this year. Due to the success of these events, several MITESOLers are already preparing future similar workshops.

Another MITESOLer who has kept himself busy traveling around the world is Glenn Deckert. If you’d like to learn more about Glenn’s trip to Singapore, read his report on the RELC seminar on page 11.

As usual, this newsletter closes with a book review. This time Monica Sue Gruler provides us with a very positive review of Views and Voices: Writers of English Around the World. If you are looking for a book with stories written in English by multicultural writers, this is the book you have been waiting for!

This is our last newsletter as it is time for us to step back and leave the newsletter co-editing duties to Lisa Hutchison and Danielle Valentini. It is also time for Fabiana to say goodbye to Michigan since she is moving to Texas as we get this issue printed and mailed to you. Good luck to Fabiana at UT Austin! We want to send our sincere thanks to all who have offered advice and contributed articles during these two years. Thank you very much! It has been a pleasure working with you!

The Newsletter Co-Editors reserve the right to edit any material submitted for publication to enhance clarity or style. Submissions may also be shortened to fit available space. The author will be consulted in changes are substantial. Potential changes in content will be verified before publication.
President's Corner (Cont from p.1)

Without your sharing of ideas, there is no conference. The deadline for proposals is approaching, so please do not delay.

At the conference this year or in the next newsletter, we will have a report from our first ATE-CR Travel Grant awardee, Carolyn Fike. She will be attending the annual conference in the Czech Republic in September. I am sure she will return with stories galore to share with us.

I must also take a moment to thank the members of the nominations committee, Chair Shari Weisbaum, Jackie Moase-Burke, and Sue Dyste. They got moving early this year, and as a result, in this newsletter you can find bios of the candidates standing for election this fall. Thanks for the great organization you have shown. Also, thank you to those who have agreed to being nominated. This is a volunteer organization, and nothing happens without you.

I look forward to seeing you all at the conference in Grand Rapids. If you have any questions or concerns about the conference, be sure to contact the conference chair or a member of the conference committee. See the enclosed registration form for contact information. Non-conference MITESOL questions can be sent to me at jwcraft4mitesol@yahoo.com.

MITESOL PARTY IN LONG BEACH, CA

Amy Yamashiro with Liam, the youngest attendee at TESOL

MITESOLers enjoying the MITESOL party at the Bubba Gump Shrimp Company
Conference News!
By Christy Pearson, 2004 MITESOL Conference Chair

Plans are progressing for the 2004 MITESOL conference with this year's theme of Writing the Academic Waves. The conference, scheduled for Friday, November 12 and Saturday, November 13, will be held at the Eberhard Center on the downtown campus of Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids. We are very excited to have Tony Silva as our plenary speaker. Dr. Silva is an associate professor at Purdue University and is well known for his work and publications in the area of L2 writing. (See the call for proposals and the website for a description of Dr. Silva's work.) We are also exploring the possibility of being able to offer CEUs for attendance and participation in the conference (max. of .6). For more information on this, contact Carol Kubota at 269-979-8432, (fax) 269-979-8434, or email bclee499@net-link.net. Other special features of the conference will be posted on the website as they become available.

The call for proposals went out via regular mail to all members during May. If you did not receive one, it is also available on the website. Deadline for submissions is August 31 for sessions on Friday evening and Saturday. Deadline for submissions for possible Friday afternoon sessions are due August 14. Additional information is available on the website. We are especially looking for sessions that are applicable not only to ESL teachers, but also for K-12 regular content area teachers who have only a few ESL students in their classrooms. Several very interesting proposals have already been received. We want to hear from you! Please consider sharing your expertise and/or interests with your colleagues at the conference.

Included in this issue is a conference registration form, along with a membership form for new or renewing members. Please note that conference rates are discounted if sent in by the early deadline (September 30th). Rates are also discounted for students, part-time teachers, and retirees. If you are considering becoming a new member and pay your dues for the up-coming 2005 year, you will receive the member rate for the 2004 conference! (Of course, all current members receive the membership rate as well!) Also, for those who register early, the conference fee includes a light buffet (probably cheese, crackers, veggies, coffee/tea, etc.) on Friday evening, a continental breakfast (possibly bagels or muffins, fruit, coffee/tea) on Saturday morning, and a sit-down luncheon on Saturday afternoon. For those who do not register early, we regret that we cannot include meals due to policies by the caterer, but there are fast food establishments, small eateries, and elegant restaurants, all within walking distance. The best "value package" is to become a member (or currently be a member) and send in everything by the early deadline.

A small block of rooms has been reserved at the Days Inn, in downtown Grand Rapids. This establishment is within walking distance of the conference site and is located at 310 Pearl St. NW. You may reserve a room directly through the inn at 616-235-7611 by stating that you will be attending the MITESOL conference. Reservations must be made prior to October 15 in order to receive the conference rate; however, since only a small block has been reserved, rooms may no longer be available as time passes. Please reserve your room as early as possible, especially since there is currently a shortage of accommodations in the area. The closest establishment to the conference site, a short walk across the pedestrian river bridge, is the Courtyard by Marriott. We were not able to reserve a block here, so again, please make reservations early. For those who look to splurge on a vacation plus conference, the Amway Grand is also nearby. Additional hotels and information (directions, parking, area restaurants and attractions, etc.) can be found at the web addresses below.

A final note - please keep checking the website for all conference news. Our list serve is having difficulties sending out information (most did not receive the call for proposals via email) due to developing technologies that universities (Cont. on p. 5)

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Conference News (Cont. from p. 4)

are using to control spam. Distributing email to a large membership such as ours has been problematic as the sending university deletes it, thinking it is spam. Additionally, again due to its bulk nature, receiving email systems delete it on an incoming basis, again thinking it is spam. We appreciate your patience as we try to work through this problem that many are facing. For this conference at least, please continue to check the web site periodically for updates regarding conference news, accommodations, travel directions, and such.

For further information, check out the following web sites:
http://www.gvsu.edu/conferenceservices
http://www.grcvb.org

Questions about filling out the registration or membership forms, or about general conference issues, can be sent to: Jane DeGroot, Conference Communications Coordinator, at degroot02@students.gvsu.edu

Don’t forget to send in your proposals (pearsonc@gvsu.edu) - deadline is August 31.

Best wishes for a relaxing end to summer and we look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Board Talk
By Ilidi Thomas, Secretary

Another dynamic six months have passed! During this time, updating MITESOL documents has been a major focus of the officers. Due to recent changes in the make-up of the Board and the job descriptions of the officers, the Standing Rules are in need of revision. Also, MITESOL does not currently have up-to-date promotional materials, so in a collaborative effort, the officers have been re-drafting a brochure aimed at informing professionals outside the field of TESOL about what English as a Second Language as a field and MITESOL are about.

Connecting with members and responding to their needs have also been in the center of the Board’s attention over the past six months.
* First of all, the Board was pleased to award MITESOL member Teri Wertman the 2004 Michigan Markwardt Travel Grant, which enabled her to travel to the annual TESOL convention.
* Another award recipient - Carolyn Fike - will attend an English teachers' conference in the Czech Republic this September, as a result of the ATE-CR Travel Grant.
* In response to popular demand, a new Special Interest Group (SIG) has been formed. The Adult Ed SIG, led by Terry Pruett-Said, will provide support and a networking opportunity to teachers in the adult education setting statewide.
* The Board focused on identifying ways to support member-initiatives, such as the popular grammar workshop organized by members Jeannine Lorenger, Carole Poleski and Heidi Vellenga.

The current membership of 320 continues to grow. Hopefully, this is a sign that an increasing number of ESL/ TESOL professionals in Michigan and beyond are recognizing the benefits of belonging to MITESOL. Do encourage your colleagues to enrich this organization by joining and contributing, and we are looking forward to seeing you on November 12-13 in Grand Rapids at the Fall Conference.

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is something that happened in the past. We've been there, done that and moved on. Therefore, unfortunately, in many instances, our language learning is twice-removed from the experience of our students. Our learning may be not only a distant memory but also, in many cases, may have been based on methods—I'm thinking of what I call the "drill & spill" method, in particular—that have been abandoned in favor of a more communicative approach. As Katie Wood Ray says in What You Know by Heart (2002), an insightful text on teaching writing to children, "The problem is, when we were in school, most of us never did the kinds of things we now ask our students to do. If we do not do them as teachers, then, we would actually be trying to teach our students how to do things we've never done ourselves." Thus, to extend my previous thought, ESL teachers should not only be language learners, but they should also be actively pursuing language acquisition.

If language learning is such a wonderful experience, why shouldn't we be doing it ourselves? Are we too old? Too busy? Too ... whatever? I suspect we may be tempted to explain our lack of interest in our own language learning by using the same excuses our students use for not doing better themselves. For instance, during the last few semesters, I've had two students—one in his thirties, the other in his forties—tell me that they couldn't do any better in my class because they were too old. This was a perfect time to tell them about my own language learning experience as an "older" person and offer appropriate suggestions for learning strategies that I have found helpful. My first-hand knowledge of the subject made my advice all the more believable. I presented myself as living proof that, in spite of the "critical period hypothesis," language learning can and does happen at any age. The importance/unimportance of age as a component of language learning is part of a story Stephen Krashen, Professor Emeritus in Education at the University of Southern California, tells (available on-line at http://www.eslminiconf.net/september/krashen.html). Recalling a conversation with an avid language learner who was in her eighties, Krashen observes: "Her last words to me changed my life: 'Stephen, you are so young. So many years left, so many languages to acquire.'" Krashen was 54 at the time.

Krashen finds continuous language acquisition/learning (let's just use both terms interchangeably here) so important for those in our profession that he includes it in his "pieces of advice to a new ESL teacher" listed in the same

interview. Significantly, item #1 on his list is: "Read for pleasure in your own second language(s)." So, of course, this assumes there is a second language to begin with (and this, I have to say, should be a prerequisite for graduation from any MATESOL program). It also focuses on pleasure reading, or "free voluntary reading" as a "powerful tool" (Krashen's terminology) for language acquisition. I read People en Español, the most-accessible light reading in Spanish available at my local bookstore, and my Hispanic students love it when I refer to an article I've read there.

To facilitate language learning in my students, I look for somewhat more scholarly subject matter for articles in English to share with my students—especially at the intermediate level—to promote "free voluntary reading" outside the classroom. Basing my practice on Pablo Freire's idea of finding material to teach in the lives of our students, I'll typically wait for a student to express interest in a particular subject—saving the environment, astronomy, or politics, for example—and I'll bring in an article on the subject to share. In nearly every case, the student tells me they have read the article and we end up discussing the contents. My efforts paid off when one student brought me an article about a Japanese pop singer about whom I had expressed interest.
The article, downloaded from the Internet, was written in English!

In addition, I make it a rule to share my love of books—including books in other languages—in the classroom for the students to look at and handle no matter what skill area I’m teaching. I want to communicate my love of reading in any language to my students. I want them to see me as a language learner who has also dealt with difficulties in reading in a second language. The sad truth is that very few of our college students will actually do any of the “free voluntary reading” that Krashen promotes, but I certainly want to encourage them. My experience with enthusiasm proves that it is often contagious.

Grammatical illustrations comparing two or three different languages can be easily demonstrated using different language versions of the same book. For instance, I often choose a few sentences from Saint Exupéry’s The Little Prince (1943), available in a variety of languages on the Internet, for this purpose. As a result, my students see me as a reader of English, and as a reader of a second language as well. I also share with them any number of stories of my own mistakes that have occurred over the years as I misunderstood or was misunderstood using my new language. Believe me, there is plenty to share, and the students love seeing their instructor in this different role.

Using authentic materials in the classroom is the key to yet another reason for ESL instructors being active second language learners themselves. As in any new skill, first-hand experience is always the most illustrative of which approach works and which doesn’t. Everyone would agree that trying to place a tennis serve accurately is much more of a learning experience that reading a book of tennis tips. Likewise, the active pursuit of another language can give the instructor first-hand knowledge of why his/her students have the difficulties they do. Like those who pick up the tennis manual, we could just read Michael Swan and Bernard Smith’s Learner English (2001), which includes information on typical problems experienced by language learners from twenty-two languages. However, there is much more power in sharing our own experiences with these languages, especially when we are talking about a language important to our students, with our students. I can talk to my Russian-speaking students about my moment of triumph when I finally mastered the Cyrillic alphabet. I tell them how the letters seemed to dance over the page that first moment when they changed from strange markings to comprehensible text, and I ask my students about their experiences with English text. Similarly, when I tell my pronunciation students how to produce the sound at the middle of the English word “butter,” I relate the story of how this word actually improved my Spanish. I had studied Spanish for four years without being able to produce the Spanish trilled r sound, until one day one of my professors pointed out that the Spanish sound was similar to the medial sound in “butter.” Since using an example in my native tongue (English) had helped me produce a sound in another language, I look for other ways to promote noticing of similar phonetic comparisons between English and other native languages that I encounter in the classroom.

These stories of our own language learning can encourage our students, just as Krashen’s conversation with the woman who believed in the importance of language learning encouraged him. It seems to be that our most meaningful learning experiences occur relationally, through a sharing of our stories. When teachers and students share language learning stories in the classroom, the intersection of these experiences adds to the meaning constructed there. As Nathalie Piquemal (2004) points out, “Nonetheless, teachers have first and foremost to recognize that there are relationships to be developed with the students before any curriculum may be taught effectively.” Explaining further,
she observes, “Teaching is inherently shaped by the relationships developed with those we teach.” Sharing our stories of being language learners with our students deepens our relationship with them, and, in a very real way, forces rejection of the “store and pour” method of teaching. Instead we offer a classroom in which, as Freire proposed, the teacher is an “educator-educatee” and the student is an “educatee-educator.” How this works in your classroom will depend on you and your students.

So, how many years do you have left? How many languages do you have yet to acquire? As an ESL instructor, you really owe it to yourself and your students to make learning another language a priority.

Bibliography


Update on “Getting a Grip on Grammar”

By Judy Youngquist, Saginaw Valley State University

In response to persistent requests for more grammar presentations, Jeannine Lorenger, ESL specialist at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) and Carole Poleski, director of the English Language Program at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, developed and coordinated “Getting a Grip on Grammar II,” held at Saginaw Valley State University on Saturday, May 22. Co-sponsored by Heidi Vellenga, director of the English Language Program (ELP) at SVSU, the program, second in a series, drew some 30 potential, new and veteran teachers from around the state. Featured speaker Kerry Segel, professor of English and chair of the ESL Teaching Certificate Program, presented “Introduction to the Teaching of Grammar and the Practical Implications of Grammar History.”

Other presentations included “Grammar Games” and “Alternative Assessment for Grammar” by Jacquie Osborn, ESL specialist at SVSU; “Useful Websites for Grammar Practice” by Judy Youngquist, ESL specialist at SVSU; “Authentic Materials in the Grammar Class” by Lorenger and Poleski; and “Using Web Pages to Teach Grammar” by John Lesko, assistant professor of English at SVSU; “Panel Discussion: Integrating Grammar into Content Classes” by Segel, Elizabeth Niergarth, ELP instructor at SVSU, and Sandra Hagman, ESL/social studies instructor, Southfield Lathrup High School. The presentations were followed by a “Ten-minute Tips” session in which all presenters and participants could share ideas.

Lively discussions continued throughout the day as participants shared insights and different perspectives. All presentations from the workshop received very positive comments (one evaluator wrote unequivocally, “I loved Kerry Segel!”) and such enthusiastic response that the presenters have been invited to give another “Getting a Grip on Grammar” this coming fall in Battle Creek.

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Brazil (Cont. from p. 1)

of an unusually cold Michigan winter, I returned to the Great Lake State in April 2003. I was greeted by chilly, not-yet-springlike temperatures and by the warm curiosity of family and friends. While all of my TESOL friends are welcome to listen to personal stories over a glass of wine or an iced caipirinha, the short answer to “How was Brazil?” is “Great, inspiring, alive, warm, rich, and sensual.”

For the purposes of this column, the answer is much more specific. What I learned is that I’d forgotten how hard it is to learn a second language. Armed with a dozen Portuguese “lessons” from Brazilian friends in Michigan and two years of high school Spanish, I moved to Salvador in northeastern Brazil to spend a winter (southern hemisphere: summer!) by myself.

After settling into a studio apartment, I located a small language school and began formal Portuguese lessons. Later I switched to working with a private tutor. I carried my pocket dictionary everywhere I went. I looked up words from street ads. I checked out packaging labels. While acquaintances yammered at the beach, I poured over my homework exercises in an adjacent beach chair. I eavesdropped on conversations, one eye on the speakers, one in my dictionary. I peppered people with questions. “Como se dice isso em português?” (How do you say that in Portuguese?)

I went to hardware stores to find replacement grommets and widgets for my apartment. I shopped for clothing. I rented cars. I negotiated the health care system, had exams, read medical forms, interviewed physicians, and underwent treatments—in Portuguese! And so what did I learn from this?

1. It is exhilarating to navigate a foreign language and culture and meet with success.
2. It is tiring to have to speak a foreign language all day long.
3. It is frustrating to be less fluent, less adept, and less charming than in one’s first language.
4. It is a small victory to follow an entire conversation, to catch a joke, to understand a stranger’s question.
5. It is irritating to be slow, to be misunderstood, and to appear stupid to the natives around you.
6. Our ESL students back in the States, regardless of their proficiency level, face these realities every day.

So what do I recommend to my colleagues? To get out and start learning a new language. Better yet, move abroad for a month, a semester, or a year. If you’re like me, it may have been ages since you last spent an extended period outside an English-speaking land and struggled against the daily travails of trying to decipher fast speech or make sense of idioms.

The best way to renew your solidarity with your students is to put yourself into their tenuous and vulnerable positions. Want a reminder of what “too much homework” feels like? Become a student again. Want a taste of auditory overload? Sit in front of a television show in your least proficient language. Sit on the other side of the teacher’s desk to see just how clear those language lessons are. I guarantee that putting new words in your mouth and behaviors in your environment will make you savor the small successes and commiserate the conundrums from a very real understanding. Boa sorte!
CALL SIG Update
by Carol Wilson-Duffy and Anne Todd

The CALL SIG scheduled two shareshops this past year. The first was held at MSU in January and the topic was developing digital video using iMovie. This was the first shareshop for the CALL SIG in a while, so it was delightful to see so many members up and at’em at 9:00 in the morning on a Saturday—and I should mention it was a freezing cold Saturday morning. Eight members attended and each created a short video with digital footage, still pictures, transitions and music. The other shareshop was scheduled for August 14th on creating online materials using a free authoring program called Hot Potatoes.

If you are interested in attending a shareshop, hosting one, or have a suggestion for a one, please email wilson77@msu.edu or toddanne@msu.edu

This Issue’s Helpful Tips & Resources for Surviving in Cyberspace

Cool Software
Hot Potatoes (http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/)
The Hot Potatoes suite includes six applications, enabling you to create interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises for the World Wide Web. It is free of charge for those working for publicly funded non-profit-making educational institutions who make their pages available on the web. This application must be first downloaded. Version 6 is currently only available for Windows, MAC users can download the older version.

Quandary (http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/quandary.php)
Quandary can be used to create web-based action mazes, which they define as “a kind of interactive case-study; the user is presented with a situation, and a number of choices as to a course of action to deal with it.” For language learning, it provides an interesting way to present and review vocabulary, improve reading skills, or present cultural information (see their example maze of an ESL student’s dilemma with his evil landlady). It is shareware; you can download and use a stripped down version of the application for free, but if you think you want access to the full range of features, you’ll need to purchase a license ($50.00).

Great Reading for Language Teachers using Technology
If you want to know the latest language resources and technologies available to language teachers, check out the ON THE NET and EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES columns published by the Language Learning and Technology Journal. Issues are published three times a year and columns are extremely helpful. The two latest columns can be found at: http://llt.msu.edu

Need to Improve your Tech Skills?
The Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers has a wonderful website with many resources for all level of techies. In addition to a check list of technology skills that a teacher should have, they also have a detailed set of 16 learner modules from beginner through advanced levels, geared at teaching the very basic CALL concepts such as Introduction to computer hardware and software: what the language teacher needs to know and even more complex topics such as CALL software design and implementation and Managing a multimedia language centre. You can find the website at: http://www.ict4lt.org/en/index.htm

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Report on the RELC “seminar” in Singapore
By Glenn Deckert, Eastern Michigan University

I had good memories of attending a RELC Seminar in Singapore over 12 years ago when I was based in Hong Kong, so I decided to attend this annual seminar once again rather than make the trip to the TESOL conference in California this year. RELC stands for Regional English Language Center, and among many other undertakings it hosts an annual three-day “seminar” for English teachers in Singapore and from surrounding countries. This year among key speakers for the April 19-21 event were Stephen Krashen, Paul Nation and Dick Allwright. While my 25 hours of one-way point to point travel time was a little tiring, the conference itself was very refreshing.

First of all, with total attendance limited to 500, one gets to see a lot of the same people again and again. Except for local attendees, most participants were accommodated in the hotel section of the one RELC building and each day had two meals together in the dining facilities of the same building. All the seminar rooms were right there, so little time was wasted moving between sessions. I had the privilege of having meals, coffee breaks or short visits with professionals from Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan and China as well as from New Zealand and Australia. It appeared that there were only three of us from the US this year. The small scale nature of the conference made it possible to rub shoulders and chat with even the principal invited speakers.

Second, throughout the conference the formal presentations focused exclusively on the business of teaching language, training teachers or understanding issues in applied linguistics. My nearly three hours at Krashen sessions as well as attendance at Paul Nation’s session convinced me further of the need for English learners to be doing systematic extensive reading at their levels of comfort—even if that might not work as much magic as Krashen seems to maintain. Informal chats were also stimulating. Could you guess the reason, according to a Japanese professor, why a college of 4,000 students was reduced to just 1,000 over the last few years? His answer is that his college happens to be a women’s college, and segregated higher education no longer appeals very much to Japanese women. Then, I remember the story of a young Indonesian instructor who after being awarded a US Fulbright grant for study in America could never get to the US. The reason: His name was identical to a known terrorist associated with 9-11, and every State Department computer put a stop on him. He finally gave up. Frankly, with the spread of so much anti-Americanism throughout the world, I was surprised and impressed by the fact that I heard not a word of political complaint or commentary during the conference. Also, there was an absence of advocacy in regard to any hot social issues. I really appreciated the determined focus of the three days.

I was pleased with the excellent turnout at my own parallel session. All 60 copies of my handout were used up one way or another. The session was entitled “Socio-cultural influences on the rise of sustained reading.”

Actually, with accommodations at about $60 per night and most meals covered by the modest registration fee, and with a good catch for the international flights, participation in RELC did not cost me much more than my typical expenses for the annual TESOL conference. I recommend trying it sometime. Learn more about RELC programs and publications from <www.relc.org.sg>. •
ELECTIONS AT THE FALL CONFERENCE

By Shari Weisbaum, Past President

I am happy to announce the candidates for the following MITESOL Executive and Advisory Board positions. Board positions are for a two-year term of office except for the President-Elect who serves one year prior to becoming President and then Past President. Each year approximately half of the board positions are up for election ensuring that we have a mix of experienced and new board members. In addition, there are several positions appointed to the Advisory Board. This year each position is uncontested; however, there will be an opportunity for nominations from the floor during the business meeting at the conference. Anyone making a nomination from the floor will need to have secured the agreement of the nominee prior to the meeting.

The Slate of Officers for the Executive Board

President-Elect: Carol Wilson-Duffy

Carol Wilson-Duffy presently works at Michigan State University as the Instructional Technology Coordinator for the Center for Language Education and Research and teaches English as a Second Language at the English Language Center there. She has a B.A. in Linguistics and an M.A. in TESOL from MSU. She has studied Japanese, Spanish, Korean, and Ponapean. Before working at MSU, she worked as an Instructional Technology Coordinator at Wayne State University in Detroit and spent three years in Korea and Micronesia doing teacher training with technology and curriculum development. Carol has held a number of leadership positions with TESOL and currently is the website editor for TESOL’s Higher Education Interest Section, the TESOL Representative for IALIT and the website editor for the Language Learning and Technology Journal. She has also served as the MITESOL Webmaster and CALL SIG Leader.

Secretary: Ildi Thomas

Ildi Thomas is an ESL Faculty member at Oakland Community College’s Royal Oak/Southfield Campus. She has over ten years of teaching experience, mainly in higher and adult education settings including Eastern Michigan University, the University of Michigan Family Housing Language Program, and the ACCESS International Language School in Ann Arbor. She has an M.Ed. from Temple University in Philadelphia and is currently working on a doctorate in Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education at Michigan State University. She has served as MITESOL Secretary since 2002 and has been a conference volunteer and presenter many times.

Membership Coordinator: Jacquie Osborn

Jacquie Osborn is a full-time ESL Specialist in the English Language Program at Saginaw Valley State University, where in addition to teaching classes she is the Listening/Speaking coordinator. She is working to expand the excellent language lab facilities on campus into a CALL lab using Blackboard. Jacquie moved to the Flint area in 1979. She has a bilingual ed. background and has worked at the International Institute of Flint and the Flint School District’s Adult-ESL program. In 1996 she began working for the local ISD and was a coordinator for 22 area school districts helping local classroom teachers, tutors and volunteers meet the needs of K-12 ESL students. After completing her Master’s degree which she began in 1996, she joined SVSU. Jacquie says, “My history in ESL is long, my background is varied and my interests keep expanding...I believe 2004 is an opportunity year to become more active in MITESOL.

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The Slate of Officers for the Advisory Board

K-12 SIG Leader: Ewa Ostrowski

Ewa Ostrowski has been the Middle School ESL Coordinator for the Troy Public Schools for the past six years. Her special strengths include improving organization and designing surveys. Ewa is a member of both MITESOL and TESOL. She is a native speaker of Polish.

CALL SIG Leader: Anne Marie Todd

Ann Todd is an instructor of ESL at Michigan State University’s English Language Center and a coordinator of less commonly taught languages. Her initial interest in using technology and computers in language teaching stems from her past work experience in the I.S. field, where she worked in Software testing, support and project management. While earning her MA in TESOL, she worked both as an ESL teaching assistant and on varied online and distance language earning projects. As an ESL instructor, Anne is interested in ways in which technology can support current language teaching pedagogy and enhance the classroom learning experience. Working in the field of less commonly taught languages (LCTLS) has further deepened her interest in using technology and the internet to develop and share materials to teach languages for which few materials exist.

Appointed Positions to the Advisory Board

Newsletter Editors: Lisa Hutchison and Danielle Valentini

Lisa Hutchison graduated from EMU’s MATESOL program in April, 2003. She has worked part-time for Oakland Community College for four years. She has also taught ESL for an adult education program, private business schools, Wayne RESA, and most currently teaches ESL full-time at Southfield-Lathrup High School. Lisa joined MITESOL in 1999 when she returned from volunteer teaching in Cameroon, West Africa, after finishing her undergraduate degree in English/Teaching ESL. Lisa has been a volunteer at many recent MITESOL conferences. Her presentations at MITESOL and the Graduate Student Forum at TESOL 2003 involved her graduate work in standardized assessment tools for K-12 English language learners.

Danielle Valentini is a 2002 graduate of EMU’s MATESOL program. She has been teaching ESL part-time at Washtenaw Community College and Oakland Community College, where she also tutors at the Individualized Instruction Center. Danielle’s interest in MITESOL began in 2001 as a graduate student when she volunteered at the MITESOL conference in Ann Arbor. Since then she has enjoyed the benefits of membership, especially attending the conferences and learning more about her profession. In the future, Danielle would like to begin research in post secondary writing evaluation.

Exhibits Manager: Noel Woodcraft

Noel Woodcraft agreed to take over the Exhibits Manager position for the 2004 MITESOL Conference when family responsibilities forced Tony Bouttavong to return to Laos. Although she had dreamed of a teaching career since childhood, Noel did not enter college until 1997 after her youngest daughter had begun college. Noel earned both a BA and MA in linguistics with specialties in TESOL and Teaching Language Arts from Oakland University. At Oakland, Noel was the Associate Director’s Assistant in the Center for American English and was also involved in the Hispanic Outreach program. Noel is an instructor at Oakland Community College. Noel is eager to be more involved with MITESOL and to give back to those who have given so much to her.

MITESOL Messages: August 2004
NEW TESOL POSITION STATEMENTS

TESOL announces position on B-visas

Alexandria, Virginia (July 2004) – At its recent meeting, the Board of Directors of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), announced the association’s position on the use of B-visas for short-term language study in the United States. The statement reads:

“TESOL supports the use of B-visas, the visa category used by the Department of State for tourists and business visitors, for short-term language study in the United States.”

TESOL announces position on the value of IEPs in the United States

TESOL announced the association’s position on the role and value of intensive English programs (IEPs) in the United States. The statement reads:

[...] Language education and training are an important part of international exchange, and within the United States, short-term intensive English programs (IEPs) have served a unique role in advancing cross-cultural communication and understanding. Not only do IEPs often serve as gateways to higher education in the United States, they also serve an important cultural role as well. Through their study of English, students at IEPs are exposed to U.S. culture and society, and through interactions with their fellow students on campus and in their local community, IEP students gain firsthand knowledge of the United States, its values, and its people.

[...] TESOL strongly supports and values the role IEPs play in promoting high-quality education, collaboration in a global community, and respect for diversity and multiculturalism, and urges the U.S. government to put in place regulations that facilitate, rather than hinder, students’ access to English training in the United States.” [...]

For the complete statements please visit TESOL’s website at http://www.tesol.org
One of the most challenging aspects of using literature in ESL classrooms is locating texts that are both linguistically accessible and culturally relevant for learners. We may want to use literature that reflects students' cultural heritage, but it can be difficult to make good choices if we don't have thorough knowledge of those cultures ourselves. Students may not see their own experiences reflected in stories about American life, and may lack the background knowledge to grasp culturally specific references and unfamiliar speech varieties that appear in some stories. How can we appeal to learners who use English to communicate, but who identify with cultural issues that are not necessarily American?

Teachers who have attempted to address some of these concerns on their own may be delighted to discover a book that has done much of the work for them. *Views and Voices: Writers of English Around the World* contains excerpts from stories “by authors whose first language is English, but whose first culture is not” (p. ix.). There are many things to appreciate about this book, not least of which is the authors' commitment to quality content. Readings are engaging and meaningful, yet not overwhelming in length or language; the text is geared toward intermediate level students and will interest students of many ages and cultural backgrounds.

Library assignments, and biographical information about each author precede each story to provide background information, help the reader to identify and focus on the topic, and encourage a personal connection with the writer and his or her work. Vocabulary words to be learned are glossed, along with brief definitions or synonyms for some words that may be necessary for comprehension. Both appear in margins near where they appear in the story, and clear vocabulary directions for the reader are provided. Post-reading exercises encourage further exploration of the topics and language in each story, and readers are referred to additional readings by the featured author in an effort to promote independent reading.

The clean, contemporary design will appeal to readers who may have developed an aversion to textbooks resulting from unpleasant associations. The publishers have made a conscious effort to depart from a typical textbook design in an effort to entice the reader to read for enjoyment. The result is a book that is not limited to use in traditional classroom situations, although it can certainly work there. Because of the broad appeal of the readings and practical nature of the exercises, it is also a valuable tool for tutors and teachers in a variety of settings, as well as for independent learners.

*Views and Voices* is organized into three parts, each dealing with a different theme. "In the Family" shows how individuals in relation to partners and family. Stories in "Into Adulthood" consider the experiences of young people as they mature and enter adulthood. "Culture Clash" deals with issues of cultural groups in conflict. The fourteen stories in these three sections reflect the talents and insights of authors with roots in the Middle East, Jamaica, Sweden, Singapore, Korea, India, Antigua, Ghana, India, Nigeria, Botswana, Vietnam and Japan.

At just under 190 pages, the book is of manageable length for a one semester course. However, the resources it provides allow for much more extensive and long-term use. The text is concise but rich, reflecting the authors' attention to the most useful information. Readers will appreciate the lack of wasted space and absence of unnecessary details. While the stories will benefit international students seeking to improve their language skills, the content is equally appealing to any reader who is interested in the multicultural perspectives of talented writers who share their stories in English.
Tony Silva, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of ESL at Purdue University, where he directs the ESL Writing Program and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses for ESL students and ESL teachers. With Ilona Leki he founded and edits the Journal of Second Language Writing; with Paul Kei Matsuda he founded and hosts the Symposium on Second Language Writing and edited On Second Language Writing and Landmark Essays in ESL Writing; and with Colleen Brice and Melinda Reichelt he compiled the Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship on Second Language Writing: 1993-1997. He currently serves on the Editorial Boards of Assessing Writing, Journal of Writing A Assessment, Journal of Basic Writing, TESL Canada Journal, and Writing Program Administration. It is our honor to welcome him to Michigan.

MITESOL Messages
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